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“THE USURPING PRINCEPS”: MAXENTIUS’ IMAGE AND ITS CONSTANTINIAN LEGACY

Abstract: This article deals with self-representation of Maxentius, who ruled over Italy and North Africa between 306 and 312. It focuses on the imagery and language that was distributed through coins and portraits during Maxentius’ reign, as well as their reception under Constantine immediately after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge (312). It argues that Maxentius revitalized the tradition of a *princeps* at Rome in order to play upon sentiments of neglect felt at Rome and the time. In coinage, this was most explicitly done through the unprecedented use of the *princeps* title on the obverse, which initially may have caused a misunderstanding in the more distant parts of the Maxentian realm. The idea of the *princeps* was captivated in portraiture through visual similarities with revered emperors, especially with Trajan, and through insertion of Maxentius’ portraits in traditional *togate capite velato*. When Constantine defeated Maxentius in 312, he took over some of the imagery and language that had been employed by his deceased adversary. Constantine, too, presented himself as a *princeps*. This not only shows that Maxentius’ representational strategies had been effective, but also brings to light how Constantine managed to deal with the memory of someone who had been one of Rome’s greatest benefactors.

Keywords: *Maxentius, Constantine I, imperial representation, princeps, reception*

1. INTRODUCTION

In October 306, Maxentius, the son of the retired emperor Maximian, claimed the imperial purple. In doing so, he undermined the existing system of imperial rule, the Tetrarchy. This system was the result of the decision of Diocletian and Maximian in 293 to include two junior emperors (*caesares*) into their imperial college in order to be better able to deal with the many (military) tasks at hand. From that moment onwards the Roman Empire had been ruled by a successive imperial college of four emperors consisting of two *augusti* and two *caesares*. In May 305, Diocletian and Maximian took the unprecedented step of retiring from office, promoting their *caesares* to *augusti* in their stead. In the search for new *caesares*, Constantine and Maxentius, the sons of the Tetrarchic rulers Constantius Chlorus and Maximian respectively, were ignored, a measure that would soon have serious consequences. For in July 306 Constantius Chlorus, now one of the *augusti*, suddenly died, which was the incentive for his son Constantine to claim the imperial purple. Although according to Tetrarchic custom, Constantius’ *caesar* Valerius Severus should have been promoted to the rank of senior emperor (*augustus*), this is not what immediately happened. Eventually, though, the surviving *augustus* Galerius allowed Constantine into the Tetrarchic college as a *caesar*. These events of July 306 may have partly influenced Maxentius’ decision to take a shot at the throne as well.¹ He too was the son of a Tetrarch and was being

¹ Zosimus states that Maxentius was urged to proclaim himself emperor upon seeing an image

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left out of the line of succession. But for him, there was no vacancy. So contrary to what had happened to Constantine, Maxentius was denied inclusion into the Tetrarchy after he publicly accepted the imperial office on 28 October 306. Instead, he would go down in history as a usurper whereas the other Tetrarchic son would become the sole ruler of the Roman Empire.

The fact that he was not recognized by his “Tetrarchic colleagues” did not mean that Maxentius detached his rule completely from the world around him. In order to present himself as a legitimate emperor, he had to act and present himself as one. At the same time, being the fifth in a system of four rulers, he could not easily present himself as a Tetrarch.² But, Maxentius held the advantage that he was situated in the ancient capital of Rome, which had experienced a certain degree of neglect under the Tetrarchy. Although the Tetrarchs still invested in the eternal city, particularly through public buildings and the restoration of the Forum Romanum, the privileged position that Rome had enjoyed throughout her history had diminished in favor of Tetrarchic residences such as Antioch, Milan, Thessaloniki, and Trier.³ The dissatisfaction with this new situation reached its climax when one of the *augusti*, Galerius, tried to subject the city of Rome to taxation and, at the same time, aimed to dismantle the praetorian guard stationed in the city. It was at this moment that a group of officers turned to Maxentius to accept the imperial office.⁴ Given the circumstances surrounding his claim, Maxentius was, perhaps unsurprisingly, strongly committed to restore the city of Rome to its former glory. This gave Maxentius ample opportunity to give his rule a sense of legitimacy different from that of the Tetrarchs.

This article focuses on the way in which Maxentius chose to present his rule as deriving from the city of Rome itself, thereby strongly basing himself on renowned predecessors. It will especially focus on Maxentius’ revitalization of the tradition of a *princeps* at Rome. This title found its origin in Republican Rome but was perhaps more importantly reintroduced by Augustus to signify that he was the first amongst equals (*princeps inter pares*), in Augustus’ case: the first amongst senators (*princeps senatus*),⁵ the chief man of the Roman state (*princeps* translates as ‘the first’ or ‘the distinguished’).⁶ Over time, however, the emperors of Rome started to present their position in stronger, absolute terms. In this article, we will argue that Maxentius revived the *princeps* tradition as a strategy to legitimize his claim

of Constantine as emperor in Rome, see Zos. 2.9; with RIDLEY 1982, 28–29; VAN DAM 2011, 227–228.

² On which, see HEKSTER 1999, 724; HEKSTER 2014, 17; HEKSTER 2015, 291. Some have even argued that Maxentius refrained from referring to the Tetrarchic system at all, see CULLHED 1994, 93–94; OENBRINK 2006.

³ CULLHED 1994, 32–33, 62–64; HEKSTER 1999, 721–724; MARLOWE 2010, 199–200; VAN DAM 2011, 231, 239. Also KALAS 2015, 26–29, 30–39, which explores the Tetrarchic building activities in Rome. Disapproval for the emperors’ absence from Rome can also be read in the panegyrics (*Pan. Lat.* X.13.4; XI.12.1–2).

⁴ Lact. *De mort. pers.* 26.2–26.3; Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 39.47; with CULLHED 1994, 32–33; VAN DAM 2011, 226–227; CORCORAN 2017, 62–63.

⁵ RG/ *Mon. Anc.* 1.7: ‘*Princeps senatus fui usque ad eum diem, quo scripseram haec, per annos quadraginta.*’

⁶ For the Republican notion of *princeps senatus*, see SUOLAHTI (1972); for the appropriation of this title by Augustus, see COOLEY 2009, 160–161; ROWE 2013, 11–15.

outside the constitutional boundaries of the Tetrarchy. In order to shed light on this process, we will analyze Maxentius’ self-representation through official coinage and portraiture. Since it is the *communis opinio* that these were designed at the imperial court with the consent of the emperor, they provide the best opportunity to analyze Maxentius’ self-representation.⁷ The first part of the article (‘Constructing the *princeps*’) will focus on the literal manifestations of the *princeps* title in Maxentius’ coinage. As such, it explores the background of its use as well as how it was implemented both in Rome itself and in the more distant parts of the Maxentian realm. The second part (‘Portraying the *princeps*’) brings the *princeps* title to a more conceptual level as it will analyze how the tradition of a *princeps* at Rome was translated into Maxentius’ appearance. And finally, in the third part of the article (‘Appropriating the *princeps*’) we will argue that the success of Maxentius’ strategy is demonstrated by the fact that, after Maxentius’ demise at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge (312), Constantine chose to appropriate parts of Maxentius’ image and language. The *princeps*, both as a title and as a concept, was aptly included in a visual language that meant to undermine that of Maxentius, by means of which Constantine sought the support of the same audience Maxentius had meant to target. As such, this article will shed light on how pre-existing beliefs and expectations about rulership affected the creation and the subsequent reception of the imperial image of Roman emperors.

2. CONSTRUCTING THE PRINCEPS

The clearest attestation of the idea of a *princeps* at Rome is the literal use of the title in Maxentius’ coinage. This medium therefore provides an obvious starting point for our survey.⁸ The city of Rome stood at the core of the numismatic imagery and language from the very moment coins were issued under Maxentius. Between coming to power on 28 October 306 and his demise on the same day in 312, Maxentius’ territory counted five mints. Aquileia, Ticinum, and Carthage all witnessed Maxentian emissions, but it was from Rome and the newly established mint at Ostia that the majority of his coins were distributed.⁹ The majority of the coins Maxentius struck was in the name of himself, although before Maxentius’ break with his father Maximian in April 308, the latter also appeared, along with Constantine and (until early 307) Maximinus Daia.¹⁰ Figures

⁷ WALLACE-HADRILL 1986, 67; NOREÑA 2001, 147; MANDERS 2012, 32–33 on coinage. FITTSCHEN 1971, 220–224; FITTSCHEN 2015; ZANKER 2016, 55–63 on portraiture.

⁸ The most extensive discussion on the coinage of Maxentius is DROST 2013; other important contributions include KING 1959; SUTHERLAND 1967, 271–277, 305–308, 338–347, 393–397, 417–419; CULLHED 1994, 36–41, 46–49, 76–78.

⁹ DROST 2013, 30.

¹⁰ This followed the Tetrarchic practice of ‘shared minting’, on which see SUTHERLAND 1967, 88; WEISER 2006, 209. There is also the series of memorial coin types, that have been discussed in more detail by DUMSER 2006; DROST 2013, 74–76, 84–87. They show the obverse portraits of both Maxentius’ deceased son Romulus (d. 309) and the deceased Tetrarchs related to Maxentius: his father Maximian (d. 310), his father-in-law Galerius (d. 311) and Constantius (d. 306), related to Maxentius through the marriage of his sister Fausta to Constantine. Whereas the shared minting had been an indication of some sort of alternative imperial college, these commemoration types were mostly likely just meant to reinforce the legitimacy of Maxentius alone.

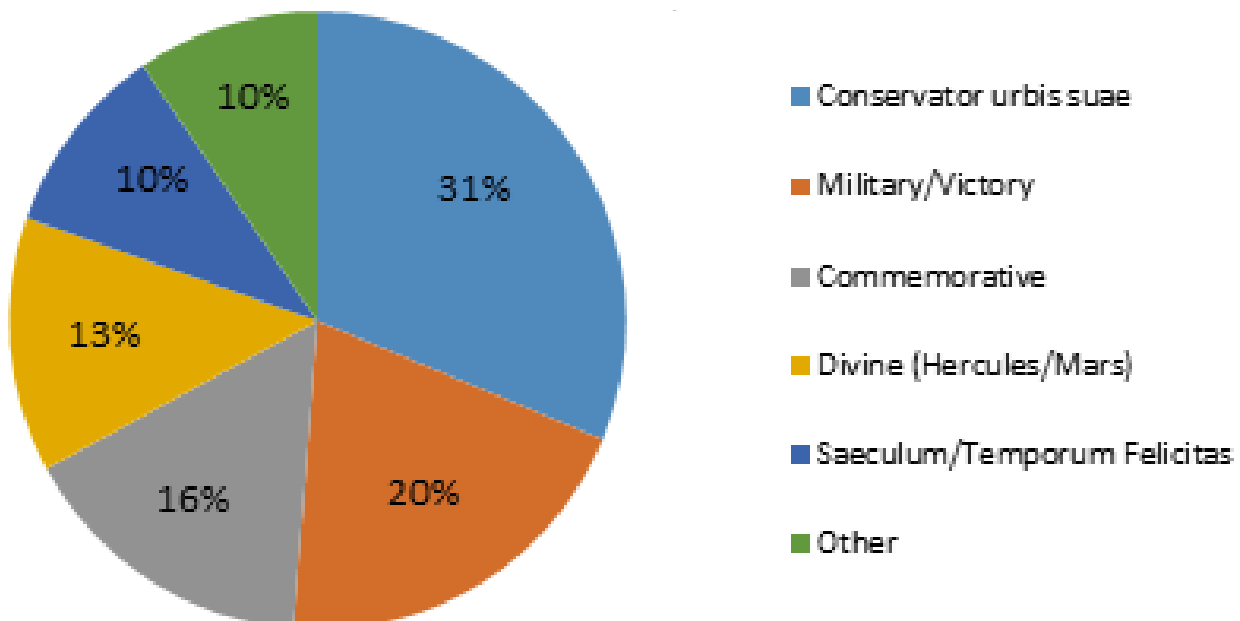


Fig. 1. Reverse themes found in the coinage of Maxentius, as recorded in RIC, divided by themes. This diagram only includes the coins on which Maxentius' portrait features on the obverse (N = 240).



Fig. 2. Bronze coin, RIC VI Ticinum 103 (308-310), depicting laureate head of Maxentius with eagle-tipped sceptre on the obverse (legend: IMP MAXENTIVS P F AVG CONS), and Roma seated in temple, holding globe and sceptre on the reverse (legend: CONSERV VRB SVAE).

that adorned the reverses of Maxentius' coins included the goddess Roma, the *lupa romana*, and Castor and Pollux. There was also a prominent place in Maxentian ideology for Mars (Fig. 1), who was also intrinsically linked with the city of Rome.¹¹ With the exception of the latter, all of these figures found little to no resonance on Tetrarchic coinage, thus fitting the sentiment that had allowed Maxentius to come forward as champion of the Roman cause.

This focus on Rome is probably best attested on the coins that were most common in the Maxentian repertoire: those naming him *conservator urbis suae* ('preserver of his

city') in the reverse legend, which encircled a seated figure of Roma, often placed within a temple (Fig. 1; Fig. 2).¹² The temple might have been that of Venus and Roma which was rebuilt by Maxentius in 307 after it had been destroyed by a fire.¹³ Originally built by Hadrian as the first temple for the personification of the city, it was of great significance to Rome as illustrated by its centrality during the celebration of the city's thousandth birthday under Philip the Arab in 248.¹⁴ By rebuilding the temple of Venus and Roma and

¹² This type is notably absent from the mint of Ostia. At this mint Roman tradition was highlighted through the *saeculum felicitas*, in which especially the Dioscuri played a central role. See Sutherland 1967, 393-7; Albertson 1985; Drost 2013, 189-210; 2014.

¹³ Hill 1989, 15-7; Oenbrink 2006, 183; Ziemssen 2012, 139. On the rebuilding of the temple by Maxentius, see Monaco 2000; Jaeschke 2016, 181-3.

¹⁴ Gagé 1936; Marlowe 2010, 201-2. The temple was part of Hadrian's focus

¹¹ CULLHED 1994, 49; HEKSTER 1999, 731-733. See also DROST 2013, 76-78, who argues that especially after the death of Maximian in 310 Mars seems to have been favoured over Hercules – Maximian's divine patron – as *comes augusti* in Maxentius' coinage.



Fig. 3. Gold coin, RIC VI Rome 147 (307), depicting laureate head of Maxentius (legend: MAXENTIVS PRINC INVICT), and Hercules standing, leaning on club, holding bow in left hand (legend: HERCVLI COMITI AVGG ET CASS NN).

subsequently commemorating this feat on his coinage, Maxentius highlighted his connection with the city of Rome and its traditions.¹⁵ To those handling the coins it thus must have been clear that it was the new *augustus* Maxentius who made sure that Rome would prosper and its traditions would be preserved as long as he ruled.¹⁶

It is a couple of these CONSERVATOR VRBIS SVAE coins that bring us to our main topic of interest.¹⁷ They belong to the first issues put in circulation after Maxentius' accession. Within the series to which these issues belong the legends surrounding the portrait of Maxentius on the obverse, which as a rule highlighted the emperor's 'official' titles, designated him D(ominus) N(oster) PRINC(eps) ('our lord, the first man') and, more often, PRINC(eps) INVICT(us) ('the unconquered first man') (e.g. Fig. 3).¹⁸ This did not just abandon the Tetrarchic practice of styling the members of the imperial college *augustus* or *nobilissimus caesar*, but it was also unprecedented in imperial coinage as a whole.¹⁹ In an empire that for more than two decades had been ruled by a multiplicity of emperors by the time Maxentius rose to power, such a claim of being the 'first man' must have been

on the cult of Roma Aeterna, on which see Mols 2003.

¹⁵ Although the portraits and names of his allies Maximian and Constantine were also coupled with this reverse before April 308, it was most often the portrait and titulature of Maxentius that featured on the obverse. RIC lists 64 types in the name of Maxentius, while Maximian and Constantine appeared on twelve and fourteen types respectively.

¹⁶ The same idea follows from other dominant coin types from the Maxentian mints, such as those with the legends AETERNITAS AVGG N, SAECVLI FELICITAS AVGG N, and TEMPORVM FELICITAS AVGG N, which in Fig. 1 are grouped together under 'Saeculum/Temporum Felicitas'. See also Drost 2013, 78-81.

¹⁷ RIC vi Rome 135, 143-4; Carthage 53.

¹⁸ D N PRINC: RIC vi Rome 137. PRINC INVICT: RIC vi Rome 135, 138, 140, 143-144, 147-148, 153; Carthage 53.

¹⁹ Only a rare *antoninianus* of Gallienus provides us with an exception: RIC v Gallienus 257. See also Cullhed 1994, 9, who noted the remarkable fact that on the coin of Gallienus the accusative was used for the obverse title on this coin instead of the nominative, which was the common case for the imperial title on the obverse.

meant as a clear statement. Its exact significance, however, is quite hard to grasp. Various interpretations of this use of the *princeps* title have been put forward.²⁰ Following the parallel case of Constantine, some have suggested that it was a temporary solution meant to be changed as soon as Galerius, the senior *augustus* of the Tetrarchy, would accept Maxentius into the imperial college.²¹ Cullhed, however, rightly points out that the obverses of coins minted under Maxentius' authority in fact left out the portraits of Severus, the *augustus* of the administrative region in which Maxentius had come to power, and Galerius.²² This passing over of the two *augusti* makes the theory of the *princeps* title as a respectful gesture towards the Tetrarchic emperors unlikely. Instead, Cullhed argues that Maxentius took the title to leave room for his father to step in, so that the retired emperor could bestow him with imperial authority.²³ That the promotion of Maxentius took longer than Maxentius would have liked, may have been the result of Maximian's own political agenda, which at first left no room for his son as co-emperor.

Although this theory does account for the absence of both Severus and Galerius on the obverse of Maxentian coinage, it runs counter to the chronology provided by the numismatic evidence. According to Cullhed's interpretation, it was only after Maxentius felt comfortable enough to oppose his father that Maximian allowed his son be elevated to the position of *augustus*.²⁴ If we follow the chronology as suggested by the extensive catalogue of Drost, however, the

²⁰ For a discussion of the various readings of *princeps*, see CULLHED 1994, 33-34.

²¹ See e.g. ELMER 1932, 33; BARNES 1981, 30; GRÜNEWALD 1990, 23. A related yet slightly different interpretation is that SUTHERLAND 1963, 18-20, who thought Maxentius employed the title to be allowed into the Tetrarchy as a fifth man. As for Constantine seeking Galerius' recognition to be allowed into the Tetrarchy, see Lactant. *De mort. pers.* 25.

²² CULLHED 1994, 37-39.

²³ CULLHED 1994, 41-43.

²⁴ CULLHED 1994, 43.

mints of Rome as well as that of Aquileia started to designate Maxentius in the opening months of 307 as P F AVG instead of PRINC INVICT. At that time, Maximian was still *senior pius felix augustus*, which had been his title since he and Diocletian had stepped down, suggesting that he was not an 'active' emperor yet.²⁵ It was only from the summer of 307 that Maximian lost the senior part, thereby making him an active emperor as well.²⁶ This change was paralleled with a slight alteration of the reverse legend of the CONSERVATOR VRBIS SVAE-types, which from this time onwards spoke of the plural *conservatores*.²⁷ This numismatic chronology has a literary parallel in the account of Lactantius, which holds that it was only in the face of the threat of an invading Tetrarchic army that Maxentius 'sent the purple to his father and named him *augustus* for the second time'.²⁸ The sending of the purple was typically done by the senior *augustus*, and we have an almost contemporary precedent in Galerius 'sending the purple' to Constantine to accept him into the Tetrarchy.²⁹ In short, Maxentius was *augustus* before his father regained his former position.

Because of this correspondence between the numismatic and literary evidence, we may surmise who was responsible for Maxentius' elevation to *augustus* and, by extension, what was the significance of the *princeps* title in this process. It is highly unlikely that any of the invading Tetrarchs were responsible for the elevation, and it is also difficult to conceive of a situation in which Maximian as a 'retired' *augustus* bestowed imperial dignity upon his son, who would then, in turn, have bestowed the title upon his father after a couple of months. This leaves the city of Rome, Maxentius' base of operations, as a possible candidate. This also explains the gold medallion struck by Maxentius in 308 which, after the break with his father, hailed *Roma Aeterna* as his *auctrix*.³⁰ Whereas in the Tetrarchic system the senior *augustus* had been the *auctor imperii*, Maxentius hereby emphasised that the full legitimacy of his position came from

²⁵ DROST 2013, 285-7, 298-300. The silver-washed bronzes from Rome that belong to the earliest period of the Maxentian revolt that make Maximian an active emperor straight away may well have been a misreading of the current political situation: *RIC* vi Rome 161, with DROST 2013, 161. Even at Carthage, where as we shall see shortly similar confusion occurred, Maxentius is designated *pius felix augustus* at a time when Maximian is still called *senior augustus*: DROST 2013, 281-4.

²⁶ Further numismatic evidence is provided by the mint of Carthage, which – after the proper installment of the Maxentian hierarchy (on which see further below) – never issued coins styling Maximian *pius felix augustus*, instead using the *senior* variant. The mint was closed before he could receive this title. Maxentius, on the other hand, *did* receive the *pius felix augustus* title in this mint, struck in the same series in which Maximian was still *senior*. Although this could also be seen as part of a similar misunderstanding as the one we shall discuss in more detail below, here it makes more sense to connect it to the chronology found at the other Maxentian mints.

²⁷ *RIC* vi Rome 162-165; 194a-201; Ticinum 84b-86. Of interest here, too, is the Carthaginian issue with the reverse legend CONSERVATORES KART SVAE that still refers to Maximian as *senior pius felix augustus* (*RIC* vi Carthage 59). Elsewhere the plural *conservatores* is only attested with the 'active' legend for Maximian. As this type belongs to the latest emissions of the Carthaginian mint before it was closed, it could be suggested that it shows a certain delay in the proper instalment of the correct combination of obverse and reverse legend and that the mint was closed before this could be corrected. This is also suggested by the fact that only at Carthage Maximian receives the *praenomen imperatoris* as a *senior augustus*. For a similar yet slightly earlier deviation of Maxentian practice in African lands, see below.

²⁸ Lactant. *De mort. pers.* 26.7.

²⁹ Lactant. *De mort. pers.* 25.3.

³⁰ *RIC* vi Rome 173.

the ancient capital. And if the eternal city indeed played such a central role in Maxentius' elevation, no constitutional body would have been better suited for granting him imperial dignity than the Roman Senate, which, at least formally, had been central in the 'making of emperors' until the troublesome late third century that led to the advent of the Tetrarchy.³¹

The exact circumstances of this elevation may have been lost to us, but it is conceivable that it followed the nearing threat of Severus' invasion. Indeed, the anti-Tetrarchic sentiment that had given Maxentius the opportunity to present himself as 'preserver of his city' is unlikely to have ceased with a Tetrarchic invasion that was at hand. Instead, it may have fuelled the belief that the man who until then only had called himself *princeps* and seemed to have promoted a special bond with the Senate, could be the city's preserver in more than just upholding Roman traditions.³² Consequently, he was made *augustus* to withstand the imminent danger coming from the north. It was a win-win situation. The Senate regained its 'emperor-making' quality it had lost long since, whereas Maxentius, who by this time could no longer have hoped for a Tetrarchic *auctor imperii*, could boast a legitimate basis for his *augustus* title.

In this light, Maxentius' taking up of the title of *princeps* may indeed be regarded, as suggested by Cullhed, as a form of *recusatio*, the traditional refusal of imperial titles.³³ However, it was not an innovative form that was introduced by Maxentius to wait for his father's approval; rather, it was a token of respect for senatorial authority.³⁴ In assuming the title, Maxentius followed in line with the respected emperors of the past, who had not only paid great attention to the ancient capital, but had also ultimately derived their power from the city in which name they ruled. In taking the *princeps* title, Maxentius abstained from outright usurping the highest imperial rank, opting to follow the alternative route through the Senate instead. As the fifth claimant to the purple in a political environment that only left room for four, it was this Senate-based legitimacy that was the most straightforward (if not the only) way for Maxentius to come to power. And although the claim of being the 'first man' in itself must surely have provoked his Tetrarchic fellows, Maxentius could effectively claim to never have done anything unlawful before his elevation to *augustus* by the Senate.³⁵ As a matter of fact, his official media may never have recognised Severus and Galerius, but neither did they ever deny their authority or claim any of their titles.³⁶

³¹ On the traditional centrality of the Senate in the bestowal of imperial dignity, see WALLACE-HADRILL 1982, 37-38; TALBERT 1984, 354.

³² For Maxentius' relation with the Roman Senate, see VAN DAM 2011, 225-226, 241-242.

³³ CULLHED 1994, 41-42. On the *recusatio* of these earlier *principes* and its constitutional implications, see WALLACE-HADRILL 1982.

³⁴ On the link between Maxentius' *princeps* title and the *principes* of the past, especially Augustus, see DRIJVERS 2007, 20; VAN DAM 2011, 241.

³⁵ On the *princeps* title as a provocation to the Tetrarchs, see VAN DAM 2011, 241.

³⁶ Such an explanation of – perhaps ostensible – restraint could also account for the legends HERCVLI COMITI / MARTI CONSERV AVGG ET CAESS NN ('to Hercules the Companion/to Mars the Protector of our [two] Augusti and our [two] Caesares') that we find on some of the earliest coinage: *RIC* vi Rome 137-138, 140, 147-148. Constantine and Maximinus Daia – in whose name the Maxentian mints *did* strike coins – are surely the designated *caesares*.

Maxentius, then, only received imperial dignity, in almost Augustan fashion, after being asked or having stepped forward as the one who would redeem the city from greater (Tetrarchic) peril.

The reconstruction as presented above can of course never be more than a hypothesis, but what should be clear is that the use of the *princeps* title is likely to have been primarily aimed at Rome. It was meant as a nod towards the early emperors under whose reigns Rome had stood as the centre of imperial attention. Now the 'Maxentian empire' with *urbis suae* as its capital *par excellence* was meant to reflect that promise. Given this specific resonance of Maxentius' early titulature for the city of Rome, it is probably little of a surprise that in more distant parts of the Maxentian realm this notion was not immediately picked up. Carthage had joined Maxentius' cause shortly after 306, but its minting shows that it was not a narrowly coordinated cooperation from the start. Instead of naming the emperor *princeps* or *augustus*, the Carthaginian mint-masters deemed the title NOB(ilissimus) CAES(ar) an appropriate way to honor their new emperor (Fig. 4).³⁷ A milestone from Numidia that dates to the same period referred to Maxentius in the same way, suggesting that this interpretation of the changed political situation was a regional phenomenon.³⁸ Making Maxentius a *caesar* had the effect that the mint at Carthage now struck for three *caesares*, as Constantine and Maximinus Daia received the same title. The division of *officinae* demonstrates that Maxentius was even deemed the most junior *caesar*.³⁹ The only *augustus* whose portrait was distributed on coins from Carthage was Maximian, who was *pius felix augustus* whereas in the other Maxentian mints he did not receive this title until the summer of 307.⁴⁰ Making the situation all the more remarkable is the fact that some of the reverse legends coupled with the portraits of the *augustus* and his three *caesares* read SALVIS AVGG ET CAESS FEL KART ('With the [two] healthy *augusti* and the [two] healthy *caesares*, Carthage is happy'), thus suggesting a college of two *augusti* and two *caesares*.⁴¹

This local variant of the Maxentian alliance may be (and have been) interpreted in a number of ways. Some have argued that the Carthaginians, who had entertained close relations with Maximian before, were not aware of the practices of other Maxentian mints and thought that

To whom AVGG is a reference, however, is less straightforward. These coins have with Hercules and Mars the patron deities of Maximian and Maxentius respectively. Given that Jupiter – the patron god of Galerius – is entirely left out of the series, it is likely that Maximian and Maxentius are referred to here as the two *augusti*. However, both did not appear as 'active' *augusti* on the obverse, so that the former part of the formula AVGG ET CAESS NN could – in theory – have been defended as a reference to Severus and Galerius.

³⁷ RIC vi Carthage 47, 48a, 51a.

³⁸ CIL viii 22346. Another inscription that may refer to Maxentius as *nobilissimus caesar* comes from a statue base also found in Numidia: LSA 2238. However, the part that once showed the name is damaged, and also could have been a reference to Maximian, which would date the inscription to the first years of Diocletian's reign.

³⁹ Maxentius received *officina* Δ, whereas Maximian, Maximinus and Constantine were assigned *officinae* A, B and Γ respectively. On hierarchy in distribution of *officinae* at the mint of Carthage during the time of the Tetrarchy, see ELMER 1932, 25-27; SUTHERLAND 1956, 187-188. On the Maxentian hierarchy at the Carthaginian mint, see KING 1959, 58; SUTHERLAND 1967, 418-419; CULLHED 1989, 15; DROST 2013, 97-108.

⁴⁰ RIC vi Carthage 46, 50.

⁴¹ RIC vi 50-51c.

their beloved Maximian had returned to power as *augustus* with his son as *caesar*.⁴² Against the first part of this line of reasoning it could be argued that the early Carthaginian repertoire does show a couple of similarities with its Roman counterpart. First of all, it includes a number of coins that in imagery looks much like the Roman CONSERVATOR VRBIS SVAE-types, but have with ROMA AETERNA a more suitable legend for the environment in which they were struck.⁴³ Second, as in Italy, Maximian was the only one to receive an *augustus* title, and Severus and Galerius were entirely left out. And finally, the construction AVGG ET CAESS makes little sense in a strict Carthaginian context, but does fall in place if they mirror the same formula found on early Maxentian coinage from Rome.⁴⁴

An alternative reading may be that the replacement of *princeps* by *nobilissimus caesar* was an (albeit erroneous) local interpretation of a title that did not fit an African context. Indeed, in similar vein ROMA AETERNA had been deemed a better option than CONSERVATOR VRBIS SVAE in Carthage. However, such an interpretation does not account for the fact later on, the mint of Carthage *did* issue coins with MAXENTIVS PRINC INVICT as obverse title.⁴⁵ The latter also serves as a counterargument to the idea that the Carthaginian variant was the reflection of some sort of locally preferred hierarchy for the Maxentian alliance.

What seems therefore to be the most likely option is that the Carthaginian mint-masters were aware of the way Maxentius and his father were presented in coinage elsewhere, but, for the time being, came up with their own understanding of the new situation. If so, then Tetrarchic coins with a different kind of *princeps* may well have lain at the root of the problem. As a matter of fact, although never part of the obverse titulature, the term *princeps* did have a place in the Tetrarchic repertoire in the term *princeps iuventutis* ('first man of the youth'). This had already been a common way of referring to *caesares* before the Tetrarchy, and continued to appear as such after Diocletian's instalment of the Tetrarchy.⁴⁶ It was especially from the mint of Rome that coins were issued that referred to the Tetrarchic *caesares* as *princeps*.⁴⁷ This practice at the Roman mint continued under Maxentius, where Constantine and Maximinus Daia were referred to in this manner.⁴⁸ Consequently, the mint of Rome issued at one and the same time coins that used the *princeps* title to refer to the *caesares* and to the peculiar political status

⁴² CULLHED 1989, 15; LEADBETTER 2009, 186.

⁴³ RIC vi Carthage 48a-c. One of them (RIC vi Carthage 48a) was even identical to a coin struck in Rome at roughly the same time (RIC vi Rome 135). It depicted a laureate Maxentius on the obverse with NOB C as his imperial title, with a reverse adorned by a seated Roma with Victoriola surrounded by the title ROMA AETERNA. The Roman issue showed the same images, but had MAXENTIVS PRINC INVICT as the obverse title, whereas CONSERVATOR VRBIS SVAE surrounded the image of Roma.

⁴⁴ It should be noted, however, that the legend SALVIS AVGG ET CAESS FEL KART had been used before by the Carthaginian mint under the Tetrarchy, which seems to indicate that at least part of the imagery of the early Carthaginian emissions struck 'under Maxentius' were based on previous local practice, see RIC vi Carthage 29a-34b, 39a-44b. However, this does of course not explain why such a legend was used whilst the mint struck in the name of only a single *augustus* and three *caesares*.

⁴⁵ RIC vi Carthage 53; DROST 2013, 283, no. 22.

⁴⁶ On the early use of this title, see HORSTER 2011.

⁴⁷ RIC vi Rome 51-55, 57a-58, 60a-61A, 125, 127; Siscia 18a-b; Serdica 8a-9b.

⁴⁸ RIC vi Rome 141-142; 150-151.



Fig. 4. Bronze coin, RIC VI Carthage 51a (306), depicting laureate head of Maxentius (legend: M VR MAXENTIVS NOB CAES), and personification of Carthage standing in long robe, holding fruits in both hands (legend: SALVIS AVGG ET CAESS FEL KART).

of *princeps invictus* Maxentius.⁴⁹ This double use of the title may well have effected a degree of confusion. It may have led the Carthaginians to believe that the *princeps* title that was attached to the name of Maxentius was meant as a way of referring to the more common *princeps iuventutis*. Its actual meaning as a reference to the delicate balance of power may have been clear to the receiving end in Rome itself, to whom the *princeps* title was likely to have been primarily directed, but this was different for the people inhabiting the African littoral. With the winter as a possible complicating factor for sailing and, by extension, for communications between Italy and Africa, the Carthaginians may have been left without such detailed knowledge at the early stages of the Maxentius' rule, thus basing themselves at the available coinage instead.⁵⁰

The apparent mistake was soon corrected. On the issues that followed the NOB CAES coins, Maxentius was referred to as *princeps invictus*.⁵¹ At the same time, Maximian reverted to being *senior augustus*, and a new distribution of the *officinae* indicated the hierarchy as desired by the Maxentian regime.⁵² That an official hand from Rome could be witnessed in these new Carthaginian issues is further attested by the fact that Carthage now received its own CONSERVATOR-version on which a personification of

either the city figured in the place of the goddess Roma.⁵³ If we recall the promise of a golden age for Rome that had accompanied their Roman equivalents, we may also think of a similar promise brought to Carthage with the African CONSERVATOR-types, which may well have been expressed during the *donativum* of spring 307.⁵⁴ Although the latter is of course rather speculative, the sudden change to a (visual) language that mirrored that of Rome clearly shows that the time of confusion was over, as Carthage and Africa received their own place in the ideological framework of *princeps invictus* Maxentius. The title of the latter was to change soon. In the same series as the *princeps*-types, we can already witness Maxentius' promotion to *augustus*.⁵⁵ This was followed by a couple of series in which it had become his only title, a development also visible in the other Maxentian mints. The mint of Carthage soon afterwards ceased its production – well reflected by the fact that Maximian never appears as an active emperor – only to issue coinage again at the time of Domitius Alexander, to whose rebellion we shall return below.

Despite its disappearance from the obverse legend, the *princeps* title was not gone forever. It reappeared on a reverse type showing Mars surrounded by the legend PRINCIPI IMPERII ROMANI.⁵⁶ This type was included into the series of *aurei* and gold multiples issued directly after Maxentius' break with his father in April 308.⁵⁷ This series was probably meant to be distributed during a *donativum*

⁴⁹ This simultaneous emission different gradations of the same title can perhaps also be read in the light of the rivalry between the Constantine and Maxentius. Whereas Constantine had beaten Maxentius in being allowed into the Tetrarchy, the Maxentian mints hit back at Constantine by claiming for Maxentius a principate of a seemingly higher order than the junior *princeps iuventutis* of Constantine. On the supposed rivalry between the two Tetrarchic sons see VAN DAM 2011, 227–228.

⁵⁰ On the impact of wintery circumstances on communication between Africa and Italy, see CALLU 1969, 457.

⁵¹ RIC vi Carthage 53; DROST 2013, 283, no. 22.

⁵² *Officina* A remained the one to strike for the senior *augustus* Maximian. As for Maxentius, now both *officinae* B and Γ struck in his name, instead of only *officina* Δ. This downgraded Constantine to the *officina* that had previously struck for Maxentius. Maximinus Daia had by now disappeared from the Carthaginian mint, thus indicating that he was no longer regarded as rooting for the same cause. That this was part of a larger political scheme is shown by the contemporaneous removal of Daia from the list of consuls and coinage at Rome. See DROST 2013, 72.

⁵³ RIC vi Carthage 49, 59–61. Besides the personification of Carthage, there was also a place for Dea Africa in the Maxentian repertoire, even having a separate legend with CONSERVATOR AFRICAE SVAE: RIC vi Carthage 52–58.

⁵⁴ On this *donativum*, see DROST 2013, 44.

⁵⁵ RIC vi Carthage 54, 57, 60, with DROST 2013, 283–284.

⁵⁶ RIC vi Rome 172; DROST 2013, 302–303, nos. 48, 53.

⁵⁷ The following analysis follows the chronology as suggested by DROST 2013, 144–149. For Maxentius' break with his father, see Lactant. *De mort. pers.* 28. It was not the first time the type was issued, as we have an earlier example in RIC vi Rome 186, likely to have been struck before the break with Maximian. Still, the type had been exclusively linked to Maxentius' portrait and its later reappearance on two larger denominations (a double and a quadruple *aureus*) will have given the type greater resonance.

to bolster the support of his army.⁵⁸ Such an event would have provided Maxentius with the opportunity to announce an ideological program that accounted for his now isolated position.

This isolation finds expression in the series of the PRINCIPII IMPERII ROMANI type in a transformation of the reverse legend, a development that is also apparent from Maxentius' regular coinage. Whereas the reverse had previously, in Tetrarchic fashion, most often referred to the Maxentian imperial college with legends ending in AVGG ET CAESS NN,⁵⁹ the reverse legends now appeared in the singular.⁶⁰ This is for example exhibited by one of the series' centre pieces: the aforementioned octuple aureus with the legend ROMAE AETERNAE AVCTRICI AVG N that accompanied an image of a *togate* Maxentius receiving a globe from Roma.⁶¹ The legend of this medallion meant to remind his followers of the origins and the legitimacy of his authority: the city and its institutions that had sided with Maxentius after his fallout with Maximian. The PRINCIPII IMPERII ROMANI type itself further highlighted this Rome-based legitimacy, by placing Maxentius under the protection of Mars, a deity with strong ties to the ancient capital.⁶² The legend is doubtlessly linked with Maxentius' earlier titulature.⁶³ Even though his official title had been changed to a more conventional one by now, the *idea* of Maxentius as a *princeps* was apparently still valid. The topicality of this idea would have been reinforced by the coins already in circulation that showed Maxentius surrounded by the *princeps* title.⁶⁴

As is apparent from the same series, the break with Maximian brought an additional layer to Maxentius' ideological program. In fact, there was also a place for Hercules (the divine patron of his father Maximian), who retained his position as imperial *comes* in the Maxentian coin repertoire despite the broken alliance.⁶⁵ This continued appearance of Hercules could probably be linked to the presence of Maximian's soldiers, who had chosen the side of Maxentius in 308. The obverse portraits even suggest appropriation of the Herculean image. Whereas in the Maxentian alliance Maximian had been the only one who was portrayed in Herculean fashion, now Maxentius appeared in

⁵⁸ Drost 2013, 44. For similar strategies in the Antonine period, see Rowan 2013, 236.

⁵⁹ After coins struck in the name of Maximinus Daia disappeared from the Maxentian mints, this construction became AVGG ET CAES N, see RIC vi Rome 170-1, 182-3, 185; Carthage 45.

⁶⁰ RIC lists only one aureus that has a reverse legend in the singular before April 308: RIC vi Rome 152. However, based on this reverse legend and the epithet *invictus* in the obverse title, this issue has been assigned to 310-311 by Drost 2013, 150-151.

⁶¹ RIC vi Rome 173.

⁶² Hekster 1999, 731-3.

⁶³ Cullhed 1989, 17; Drost 2013, 74. On the unlikelihood of *princeps* as referring to the figure of Mars that it accompanied, see Sutherland 1963, 19.

⁶⁴ A connection between the earlier coins with *princeps* in the obverse and the PRINCIPII IMPERII ROMANI-types has also been suggested by VAN DAM (2011), 241. On coin circulation under Maxentius, see Drost 2013, 53-62. Some caution may be required as far as the reception of the PRINCIPII IMPERII ROMANI type is concerned. Whereas before the title *princeps* had appeared on denominations of all metals, its recurrence here was only in gold, thus diminishing its effect in everyday use.

⁶⁵ RIC vi Rome 171, 181. That Hercules remained an important figure for Maxentius is perhaps best attested on the obverse of a quadruple aureus on which he appears himself wearing the Herculean lion-skin. The reverse celebrates Maxentius' consulship, which firmly places this issue after April 308.

this guise.⁶⁶ As Maximian had been forced to leave with his tail between his legs, Maxentius could effectively claim to be the new Hercules.⁶⁷

By retaining Hercules and Mars as his patron deities, Maxentius could effectively claim a double imperial legacy. Through Hercules he could make dynastic claims as the son of Hercules, whereas through Mars he brought his Rome-based authority to the fore.⁶⁸ Although it had been temporarily linked to the latter, the *princeps* title, which was so instrumental in the early stages of Maxentius' bid for power, had played its part and would entirely disappear from Maxentian coinage. However, its conceptual equivalent would prove to be more persistent.

3. PORTRAYING THE PRINCEPS

Maxentius' portraits provide an interesting parallel to the titulature and imagery that appeared on his coins. First, it is important to mention that the portraits of his contemporaries alluded to a different visual strategy. The four Tetrarchs were often presented as indistinguishable from one another so that the harmony of the system at large was highlighted.⁶⁹ Examples mainly include portraits of the Tetrarchs that were made in the eastern part of the Roman Empire, such as the well-known Venice group.⁷⁰ Maxentius decisively broke with this mode of representation. It seems likely that he found inspiration for constructing his portrait in the public squares, basilicas, villas, and bathhouses in Rome, which were filled with statues of respected emperors of the past.⁷¹ All of Maxentius' surviving portraits were made in Italy, from which we can distill one official portrait type: the Dresden-Stockholm type, named after the places where two of the finest replicas are currently held.⁷² They show Maxentius with short-cropped hair, a stippled beard, and

⁶⁶ Maximian: RIC vi Carthage 45; Rome 170. Maxentius: RIC vi Rome 167-9, 241.

⁶⁷ The *FIDES MILITVM* type that was part of the same emission of aurei further strengthens the idea that the army was part of the audience targeted by Maxentius: RIC vi Rome 180. The death of Maximian in 310 made an end to the Herculean references on Maxentian coinage, which suggests that the claims resonated only as long as Maximian was still alive, on which see Drost 2013, 77. This did not cease Maxentius' attempts to seek legitimacy through the legacy of his father, as seen in the commemoration coins that followed Maximian's death, see above n. 10.

⁶⁸ On the continued importance of dynasty despite Tetrarchic attempts to avoid references to kinship, see HEKSTER 2014. The bare-headed portrait that featured on the obverse on many of these aurei and gold multiples also fits this double legacy of Maxentius as a son of a Tetrarch and a 'son of Rome'. In the early Principate this had been a means of presenting the emperor as a 'simple citizen', on which see WALLACE-HADRILL 1982, 32. Under the Tetrarchy such portraits had only appeared on the obverses at the start of the reign of this innovative imperial college of four, which makes it likely that these issues were meant to indicate political change, see RIC vi Treveri 1; Nicomedia 1; Alexandria 1. That now the mint-masters of Maxentius, who might well have witnessed some of Maximian's examples, did the same at the moment Maxentius turned out to be on his own may suggest that they were meant to express a similar message. This is further suggested by the fact that, as on the Tetrarchic multiples, the patron deities had a prominent role in the Maxentian series.

⁶⁹ On Tetrarchic imagery in general see SYDOW 1969, 5-21, 103-147; L'ORANGE 1984, 3-36; MEISCHNER 1986; WALDEN 1990; REES 1993; BARATTE 1995; KOLB 2001, 32-34, 143-205; BERGMANN 2007.

⁷⁰ LAUBSCHER 1999; NIEWÖHNER/PESCHLOW 2012.

⁷¹ On the variety of display contexts of imperial statues, see BOSCHUNG 2002 and DEPPMEYER 2008.

⁷² Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Skulpturensammlung, inv. no. Hm 406; Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, inv. no. NM SK 106.



Fig. 5: Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Skulpturensammlung, inv. no. Hm 406.

accentuated eyes (Fig. 5). These were conventional features of imperial portraiture at the time, as they were common aspects of Tetrarchic portraiture. Unconventional, however, are the comma-shaped locks on the forehead of his sculpted and minted portraits.⁷³ These mirror the hairstyles of the Julio-Claudian emperors and especially the style of Trajan. The crown and side hair of the sculpted examples likewise seem to have been modeled in likeness to earlier emperors. Trajan, once again, served as the prime example, as becomes apparent from the Stockholm head for example. (Fig. 6). Furthermore, the working of the heads, particularly the cuts on the back of the head from Dresden, suggest that all but one of Maxentius' surviving portraits were made to be set into *togati capite velato* – the traditional way in which the early emperors expressed their role as *princeps*.⁷⁴ The toga would have presented Maxentius in the traditional senatorial attire, whereas the *capite velato* would highlight his *pietas*, mirroring famous depictions of the emperor such as that of Augustus on the *Ara Pacis*.

With their plastically rendered

⁷³ On the iconography of Maxentius' portraits, see L'ORANGE 1984, 34-36; EVERS 1992; VARNER 2004, 216-217.

⁷⁴ The portrait from Hannover was meant to be set into a cuirassed statue, see EVERS 1992, 21; LSA 2662. On the link between traditional *togati capite velato* and the traditional notion of *civilitas*, see NIEMEYER 1968, 43-47; FEJFER 2008, 397-400; HOLLIDAY 2015, 204.

locks over the forehead, the portraits of Maxentius implicitly recalled emperors such as Augustus and Trajan, who had been exemplary statesmen and were known to have presented themselves as *principes*. The statue bodies that originally would have been attached to the portraits of Maxentius would have made the association between Maxentius and his role as *princeps inter pares* more explicit. They would have reminded of a time when the emperor walked amongst senators in the ancient capital and dressed as one of them. This ideal was far removed from the situation under the Tetrarchs, under whose reigns court ceremonial detached imperial rule more and more from everyday affairs. At the same time, however, the conventional military beard of Maxentius shows that he constructed his appearance not just with the traditional elite of Rome in mind, but also with that of the military. Maxentius' ideological link to Mars, who was remembered as father of Romulus and Remus and as the god of war, reinforced both purposes. In addition to the references to Mars on the reverse types of his coins (see above),⁷⁵ Maxentius paralleled himself to Mars by naming his son Romulus. We can also witness Maxentius' link to Mars in a statue dedication to the god and to the founders of Rome on the Roman Forum, interestingly found near the Senate House and the *lapis niger* (Fig. 7).⁷⁶ The inscription on the dedication reveals that the statue was sponsored by Maxentius himself, whose name was erased after 312: "To unconquered Mars, the father, and to the founders of his eternal city, our lord [[Maxentius, pious, fortunate]], the



Fig. 6. Portrait of Maxentius. Stockholm, National Museum, inv. no. 106.

⁷⁵ Explicit references to Mars on Maxentius' coinage are plenty, especially between 310-312: *RIC* vi Treveri 772c, 88, 98; Aquileia 107; Rome 140, 148, 172, 186, 189, 218-22, 266-270, 277; Ostia 3, 6, 11-12, 48-50, 55; Carthage 45, see DROST 2013, 77-78.

⁷⁶ The black stone marked the legendary grave of Romulus.



Fig. 7. CIL vi, 33856a.

unconquered Augustus (dedicates this statue).⁷⁷

Maxentius' strategy could work because the images of the emperors he meant to emulate were still present in Rome and could be revived to serve new purposes in the present.⁷⁸ The emperor Severus Alexander, for example, supposedly erected statues of deified emperors in Nerva's Forum, 'brought in from all over Rome.'⁷⁹ Septimius Severus, too, set up a statue of a deified emperor in Rome, in this case Nerva, to serve his own political needs.⁸⁰ With regard to images of Trajan, we know from Ammianus Marcellinus' account that the equestrian statue of Trajan was still visible in Trajan's Forum in Rome during the *adventus* of Constantius II in 357.⁸¹ Furthermore, the Arch of Constantine, of which construction might have started during the reign of Maxentius, incorporated scenes of Trajan during the Dacian Wars, indicating that these images were available for reuse at the time.⁸² And finally, the familiarity with Trajan's portrait in particular is demonstrated by the appearance of his head (as *Divus Traianus*) on the coins minted at Milan under emperor Decius circa fifty years earlier.⁸³

The associative bond between Maxentius' portraits and the early imperial emperors can also possibly be read in the recarving of existing portraits of Augustus and Trajan

to the likeness of Maxentius.⁸⁴ Whereas the reworking of images of Augustus and Trajan to the likeness of a new ruler would not have been considered to be appropriate in the first two centuries of the Roman Empire,⁸⁵ we witness a steady increase in the recarving of portraits of 'good emperors' from the third century onwards. As argued by Varner and Prusac, these reconfigurations were not merely the result of economic opportunism.⁸⁶ Though perhaps born out of economic necessity, certain portraits were deliberately chosen so they might transfer some of their distinct appearance to the new honorees.⁸⁷ This theory is not accepted by everyone, however. Zanker, for example, argues that the ancient viewer did not have the skills of a modern archaeologist to distil the portraits' former identities.⁸⁸ Indeed, it was certainly possible that such associations were not understood by the ancient viewer. However, we believe that the intention was not for the viewer to notice the reconfiguration, but to notice the stylistic similarities between the portrait of the emperor represented and of the emperor it sought to emulate. Given the abovementioned omnipresence of imperial portraits in cities such as Rome, including those of Trajan, people would have had ample opportunity to compare the emperors' images.⁸⁹

It has become apparent that both Maxentius' coins and portraits refer to the tradition of the emperor as *princeps*. We have explained this phenomenon as a strategy of Maxentius to play upon the sentiments felt in the city of Rome at the time. Additional use of traditional Rome-centered imagery served to strengthen this effort. At the same time, Maxentius' imagery was aimed at the support of the army, as apparent from his military look and emphasis on Hercules as his imperial *comes*. How potent Maxentius' representation had been is perhaps best illustrated by the imagery and language employed by his rival Constantine shortly before and especially after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.

⁸⁴ The portrait of Maxentius in Stockholm was possibly recarved from a portrait of Trajan, see PRUSAC 2011, no. 298. Two other portraits, one from Ostia and one from a private collection in Rome, preserve Julio-Claudian coiffures at the back and the locks in the neck. These features suggest that they were once portraits of emperor Augustus, see VARNER 2014, 56.

⁸⁵ One only has to recall Tacitus' account of Granius Marcellus, proconsul of Bithynia, to demonstrate the inappropriate nature of reconfiguring imperial statues. In order to back the charges of treason against Marcellus, Romanus Hispo supposedly claimed that Marcellus had 'set a portrait of Tiberius upon another statue from which he had struck off the head of Augustus. Upon hearing this, the emperor's wrath blazed forth...' (Tac. Ann. 1.74). In fact, the only portraits that would have been deemed appropriate to replace or recarve were those of rulers who had been condemned to memory sanctions, such as Caligula, Nero, and Domitian, see VARNER 2004, 25-34, 225-236 (Caligula), 52-65, 237-256 (Nero), 115-25, 260-269 (Domitian). Cf. BERGMANN/ZANKER 1981.

⁸⁶ VARNER 2014, 55, 57; PRUSAC 2011, 50-4, 56-67.

⁸⁷ Emperor Gallienus, for example, was a known admirer of Greek culture and therefore shared a prominent common interest with the philhellene emperor Hadrian. It is therefore not all too surprising that Gallienus' later portrait types are similar to those of Hadrian and that at least four of the surviving portraits of Gallienus were recarved from portraits of Hadrian, see Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek 768, inv. no. 832 (PRUSAC 2011, no. 219); Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. MA 1223 (PRUSAC 2011, no. 211); Rome, Museo Torlonia, inv. no. 603/4 (PRUSAC 2011, no. 213); York, Castle Howard, see WOOD 1986, 101 (PRUSAC 2011, no. 221).

⁸⁸ ZANKER 2016, 99.

⁸⁹ STEWART 2007, 29; cf. ELSNER 2017, 457.

⁷⁷ CIL vi, 33856a = LSA 1388, with CULLHED 1994, 61, VAN DAM 2011, 243 (translation as 'the founders of their eternal city', referring to Romulus and Remus); CORCORAN 2017, 64.

⁷⁸ KALAS 2015, 13, also 75-6; FEJFER 2008, 393.

⁷⁹ SHA, Sev. 28.6, as cited by FEJFER 2008, 391.

⁸⁰ CIL vi 954. On the importance of Nerva in the imperial lineage, see HEKSTER 2015, 84, 96, 161, and esp. 178-83. The (re)placement of statues of early emperors in statue groups likewise attests to the continuous need to place the emperor in a continuum of imperial rule. On such statue groups, see ROSE 1997 and BOSCHUNG 2002 for the Julio-Claudian dynasty, and DEPPMEYER 2008 for the period 68-337.

⁸¹ Amm. Marc. 16.10.15.

⁸² STEPHENSON 2009, 151-153; ELSNER 2000, 165.

⁸³ RIC iv Trajan Decius 85-86. On the *divi* series of emperor Decius, see MANDERS 2012, 263-266.



Fig. 8. Portrait of Constantine. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 26.229.

4. APPROPRIATING THE PRINCEPS

In the fall of 312, Maxentius was killed at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, during which his forces were defeated by those of Constantine. When the latter afterwards entered Rome, he encountered a city in which the memory of his deceased adversary was still very much alive. Constantine, therefore, was faced with the question: how to replace an emperor that had been one of Rome's greatest benefactors?⁹⁰ In order to solve this problem, he had to dissociate the person Maxentius from the actions and policies that had made him so popular.⁹¹ The large-scale appropriation of Maxentius' public building program should be read in this light, and has been extensively discussed as such before.⁹² Often disregarded in favor of the building programs in these discussions, however, are the coins and portraits that were minted and carved in Rome on behalf of Constantine shortly before and in the wake of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.⁹³ These were, as we will argue, part of a programmatic response to Maxentius' public image that aimed to obliterate the memory of his former adversary by means of surpassing

him.

In Constantine's appearance we witness a significant change around the time of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.⁹⁴ This change can be ascribed to a new portrait type known as his Quinquennalia type.⁹⁵ Fourteen portraits survive of this type, of which eleven originate from Rome or Ostia.⁹⁶ Similar to Maxentius' portraits, Constantine is shown with the youthful physiognomy reminiscent of Julio-Claudian emperors – particularly of Augustus – and with the comma-shaped locks of Trajan. The link between Constantine and these exemplary emperors is furthermore strengthened by his depiction without a beard. Although Constantine was already presented beardless before 312 on coins,⁹⁷ the sudden change to the youthful image of his Quinquennalia type is, as argued by Kleiner amongst others, still extraordinary.⁹⁸

Part of the response to Maxentian imagery was the well-known destruction of his image, commonly referred to as

damnatio memoriae. The reason for Constantine to do so was so that he could present himself in line with revered predecessors, particularly Augustus and Trajan, without necessarily being associated with his former nemesis. As part of this attempt, at least four portraits of Constantine carved in Rome were reconfigured from heads of Maxentius.⁹⁹ Even the head of the colossal acrolithic statue from Rome might have been recarved from a portrait of Maxentius.¹⁰⁰ If so, the reconfiguration is best read along similar lines of Constantine's appropriation of Maxentius' Basilica, where the original acrolithic statue was supposedly placed.¹⁰¹ This attempt to be associated with the same exemplary leaders as Maxentius is also apparent from the reconfiguration of portraits of Augustus and Trajan to those of Constantine.¹⁰²

⁹⁴ 'È solo con l'ingresso a Roma dopo la battaglia c.d. di Ponte Milvio che si assisterà alla sostanziale trasformazione dell'immagine imperiale constantiniana', see ROMEO 1999, 198. Also SMITH 1997, 185-187; LENSKI 2016, 32-33, who also noticed that around the same time Constantine's titulature underwent similar changes.

⁹⁵ FITTSCHEN/ZANKER 1985, 147-152.

⁹⁶ See the list of replicas in FITTSCHEN/ZANKER 1985, 149-150 and FITTSCHEN/ZANKER 2014, 58, n.3.

⁹⁷ Constantine is presented both with and without beard on coinage prior to 312. Cf. *RIC* vi Thessalonica 44c; *RIC* vii Serdica 4; *RIC* vii Antioch 10.

⁹⁸ 'The coins and medallions struck by Constantine after 312 (...) document the most extraordinary transformation of an emperor in the history of Roman portraiture (...) he [Constantine] has become a neo-Augustus with a neo-Trajanic hairstyle.' (KLEINER 1992, 434). Also, ROMEO 1999, 197; THIENES 2015, 89-90.

⁹⁹ Rome, Campidoglio, Balustrade; Rome, Museo Capitolino, Palazzo del Conservatori, inv. no. 1622; Rome, Museo Capitolino, Stanza Terrena a Destra, inv. no. 1769; Rome, S. Giovanni in Laterano, Narthex. See VARNER 2014, 61, 63; PRUSAC 2011, 63-69.

¹⁰⁰ FITTSCHEN/ZANKER 1985, no. 122; PRUSAC 2011, no. 307, with further references; *LSA* 558.

¹⁰¹ JAESCHKE 2016, 179, with references.

¹⁰² New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 26.229 (recarved from a portrait of Trajan); Viterbo, Museo di Nazionale Etrusco, formerly Rome, Villa Giulia, Storerooms, inv. no. 104973 (recarved from a portrait of Augustus); London, private collection (recarved from a portrait of Augustus);

⁹⁰ MARLOWE 2010, 202, also KALAS 2015, 47.

⁹¹ HEKSTER 1999, 737; ROMEO 1999, 202. This process has also been hinted at by Van Dam (VAN DAM 2011, 244: 'Constantine too apparently tried to follow the paradigm of Augustus. But this was also the paradigm of Maxentius (...) Constantine had to refine Maxentius and his emperorship') but has thus far not been fully developed with regard to coins and portraits.

⁹² HEKSTER 1999, 737-40; MARLOWE 2010; VAN DAM 2011, 249-252; KALAS 2015, 47-74; JASTRZĘBOWSKA 2016. On the reconfiguration of images and the use of *spolia* on the Arch of Constantine, see ELSNER 2000; ZANKER 2012; LENSKI 2014; VARNER 2014, 64-70. DRIJVERS 2007 on the different ways that Constantine framed his former enemy after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge.

⁹³ Kovacs 2016 discards the theory that Constantine's portraits were related to those of Maxentius; rather, he regards both as similar, yet independent, attempts to escape Tetrarchic representation, see KOVACS 2016, 854. ROMEO 1999 takes the opposite view by stating that the classicism of Constantine's second portrait type would not have been possible without the workshops of Rome and Ostia that were responsible for Maxentius' portraits, see ROMEO 1999, 202, 220.

An example of such a reconfiguration is the colossal portrait now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Fig. 8), of which the locks behind the ears allow for an identification of the former honoree with Trajan.¹⁰³

Epigraphic testimony likewise demonstrates the link between Constantine and Trajan. Following the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, statues of Constantine were placed on the Forum of Trajan in Rome, honoring him as “the most glorious *princeps*”¹⁰⁴ and as “founder of the eternal security”.¹⁰⁵ In 2005, a colossal portrait of Constantine was found in a drain in the south-western part of the Forum of Trajan, showing the emperor in his new portrait type (Fig. 9).¹⁰⁶ The head possibly represented Trajan before it was reconfigured to Constantine.¹⁰⁷ The fact that Constantine was also regularly referred to as *optimus princeps* in dedicatory inscriptions would have further strengthened the association between the two emperors.¹⁰⁸

The (visual) language of Trajan is again of importance when we consider the numismatic repertoire of Constantine during and shortly after his military campaign against Maxentius. We have seen how the *optimus princeps* played an important part in Maxentian portraiture, but despite the fact that *princeps*, in both abstract and literal terms, had been an integral part of Maxentian ideology it never occurred in its *optimus* variant. This was put to good use by Constantine. From his mint at Trier Constantine issued *solidi* – the new gold denomination introduced by Constantine himself – that featured the legend S P Q R OPTIMO PRINCIPI.¹⁰⁹ Both this legend and the accompanying image recalled the reverse of coins that had been issued before by Trajan, who after receiving the title had it appear on the reverse of his coins (Fig. 10).¹¹⁰ That this was indeed a conscious attempt to refer to Trajan is further suggested by the fact that this type had not appeared since the reign of the latter.¹¹¹ Constantine had emphatically styled himself *princeps iuventutis* on the reverse of his coins before, and had also appeared as such on coins from Maxentian mints before 308.¹¹² Such previous practice



Fig. 9. Portrait of Constantine. Rome, Marcati di Traiano, inv. no. FT 10337.

may have facilitated the newly forged connection between Constantine and the Trajanic title of *optimus princeps*, yet the main reason is likely to be sought in the regained topicality of the *princeps* title under Maxentius.

A closer look at the other mints at which this type appeared is revealing in this respect. As a matter of fact, they were all struck at former Maxentian mints.¹¹³ Although it was mostly Constantine himself who appeared on the obverse, his fellow emperors Maximinus Daia and Licinius also appeared in what seem to have been an orchestrated attempt to propagate the return of collegiate rule.¹¹⁴ The fact that this reverse ceased to be issued soon after and was limited to former Maxentian mints make it likely that they were meant as some kind of counter-ideology. We have seen that Maxentius had presented himself as a *princeps* on multiple occasions during his reign, and many of the coins on which he did so still circulated in the former Maxentian territories.¹¹⁵ referring to him as *princeps iuventutis* after he assumed the *augustus* title, so that issues are attested that use *augustus* and *princeps iuventutis* at one and the same time, such as RIC vii Londinium 26, 105. On the unprecedented nature of this practice, see HUMPHRIES 2008, 92.

¹¹³ RIC vi Ticinum 114; Rome 345–352; Ostia 69, 94–99. As has been suggested by ALFÖLDI 1958, 107, the *solidus* type struck at Treveri may have served as their model. The coins struck at Arles (RIC vii Arelate 7–12) are a remarkable exception, yet can be explained by the fact that Arles was opened after Ostia was closed, which also meant a transfer of both artisans and coin types from Italy to the new mint in southern Gaul, see ALBERTSON 1985, 140; DROST 2014, 16–21. On the connection between Maxentius’ mints and Constantine’s image, see ROMEO 1999.

¹¹⁴ This is best visible in the series of bronzes from Rome on which all three appear: RIC 348a–351c.

¹¹⁵ As appears from coin hoards, Maxentius’ coins seem to have almost

Rome, Mercati Traiane, inv. no. FT 10337 (possibly recarved from a portrait of Trajan).

¹⁰³ ZANKER 2016, 99–101, no. 31.

¹⁰⁴ CIL vi 1143 = LSA 304.

¹⁰⁵ CIL vi 1140 = LSA 837. Also CHENAULT 2012, 122–124.

¹⁰⁶ Rome, Museo dei Fori Imperiali, inv. no. FT 10337, see LA ROCCA/ZANKER 2007.

¹⁰⁷ On the interpretation that the portrait was recarved from a portrait of Hadrian, see HANNESTAD 2007, 111. Zanker and Prusac believe that the portrait was recarved twice, and that it originally represented a Julio-Claudian emperor, see PRUSAC 2011, 72; ZANKER 2016, 17–9. Prusac suggests that the portrait in its second reconfiguration might have represented Trajan, see PRUSAC 2011, 72. Fittschen and Zanker argue in favor for Licinius, see FITTSCHEN/ZANKER 2014, no. 50a.

¹⁰⁸ E.g. CIL v 8004, 8041, 8059, 8069, 8079–80. See MARANESI 2016, 153, n. 24.

¹⁰⁹ RIC vi Treveri 815.

¹¹⁰ RIC ii Trajan 228, 294–296, 588–589. See also VARNER 2014, 65.

¹¹¹ This does not mean that the title *optimus princeps* was not used on coins after Trajan. Antoninus Pius, Septimius Severus, Severus Alexander and Gallienus issued a few series of coins that bore this legend on the reverse, only one of which did not include a reference to the *senatus populusque romanus*. With SPQR: RIC iii Antoninus Pius 527A, 827A; iv Septimius Severus 169A–B, 415; Severus Alexander 615; v Gallienus (joint reign) 37; Gallienus 393, 659. Without SPQR: RIC iii Antoninus Pius 815.

¹¹² Examples from Constantine’s own mints include RIC vi Treveri 733a–735, 780–7; Lugdunum 244–245; 270–275. Maxentius’ mints: RIC vi Rome 141–142, 150–151. Contrary to common practice, Constantine’s coins kept



Fig. 10. Reverse of solidus of Constantine (left: RIC vi Treveri 815) and aureus of Trajan (right: RIC ii Trajan 296), both depicting a legionary eagle flanked by two standards with the legend SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI.

The sudden appearance of an *optimus princeps* must therefore have been noticed by his former subjects. Such word play was not exceptional to the anti-Maxentian policy in Rome that followed Constantine's victory.¹¹⁶ As a matter of fact, the Trajanic imitations were not the only types that seem to have been limited to the former Maxentian mints. There were also the types that played upon Maxentius' *conservator* types by pairing an identical reverse image of Roma with legends speaking of Constantine as *restitutor* or *liberator urbis suae*, which neatly fitted the Constantinian portrayal of Maxentius' rule as an age of tyranny.¹¹⁷ The construction '*urbis suae*' had been unseen in Roman imperial coinage before Maxentius, so there can be little doubt that these legends were indeed attempts by Constantine and his associates to turn Maxentius' ideology on its head.¹¹⁸ *Liberator urbis* would later even be translated in stone on the Arch of Constantine, interestingly enough being paired with Trajanic *spolia*.¹¹⁹

Given these links with Maxentian ideology, it seems clear that the image and title that Constantine borrowed from Trajan were likewise part of an anti-Maxentian ideological program. This is further corroborated by the only example outside the territories of Constantine and exceptionally circulated within the Maxentian realm. In addition, after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge many of these coins remained in circulation. See DROST 2013, 58-64.

¹¹⁶ On which see HEKSTER 1999, 736-743; HUMPHRIES 2008, 94-97; MARLOWE 2010.

¹¹⁷ RIC vi Rome 303-304, 312. On these coins and their role in the attempts of Constantine to erase the memory of Maxentius, see MARLOWE 2010, 217-218. On Constantine and his associates deeming Maxentius a tyrant after the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, see LENSKE 2016, 33-36.

¹¹⁸ Shortly after the mint of Ostia closed, Constantine's mint-masters at Arles came up with another variant with RECUPERATORI VRB SVAE: RIC vii Arelate 13, 33-34. The connection with Ostia seems a bit harder to make here given that from the Ostian mint no examples are known of Constantinian coins that played upon Maxentius' ideology in this way. It should also be noted that these coins seem to have played less upon earlier Maxentian types, given that not Roma but Constantine himself appeared on the reverse image. Nevertheless, the '*urb suae*' does make a connection with Maxentius quite likely.

¹¹⁹ PEIRCE 1989, 391; ELSNER 2000, 165; LEPPIN/ZIEMSEN 2007, 122.

Maxentius, for which we return to Africa. The break with Maximian, whose reputation in the region is likely to have been one of the main reasons for Africa to have joined Maxentius cause, was followed by the temporary secession of Africa, where Domitius Alexander led an uprising against Maxentius as yet another *augustus*.¹²⁰ One of the bronze coin types Alexander issued at the mint of Carthage was the same in both image and legend as the reverse of Constantine's *optimus princeps* type.¹²¹ Having been ignored for almost two centuries, the fact that two men claiming the purple issued it at roughly the same time can be no coincidence.¹²² It is tempting to connect the use of this type to the most important thing Constantine and Domitius Alexander had in common: their enmity against Maxentius.¹²³ As we have argued above, the Carthaginians may have been confused

¹²⁰ For the connection between the African revolt and the break between Maximian and Maxentius, see Zos. 2.12.1; with LEADBETTER 2009, 184. Also BARNES 1981, 33-34; CORCORAN 2017, 63. For the suggestion that the conference at Carnuntum – during which Maxentius was declared an enemy of the state – is likely to have been the main incentive for the African rebellion, see DONCIU 2012, 72-73.

¹²¹ RIC vi Carthage 72. Alexander re-opened the mint of Carthage, as it had been closed by Maxentius before. See ALBERTSON 1985, 125-128; DROST 2014, 5-9.

¹²² A short note should be placed concerning the date of both issues. The African uprising is often believed to have been quelled by 309, as is for example suggested by BARNES 1981, 33; 1982, 14. The RIC, however, dates all the *optimus princeps* issues of Constantine to 310 or later. Given that earliest types of Constantine's *optimus princeps* types appeared in gold whereas Domitius Alexander had this legend appear in bronze, it seems likely that the Constantinian medallions inspired the bronzes of Domitius Alexander, rather than the other way round. This strategy is also visible in the VICTORIA ALEXANDRI bronzes that closely resembles Constantine's VICTORIA CONSTANTINI *solidi* (also said to postdate 310), see RIC vi Treveri 819 (Constantine); Carthage 73 (Domitius Alexander). We would therefore expect that either the *optimus princeps* issue from Trier should predate 310, or that the uprising was quelled at a later date.

¹²³ For the suggestion that the issue of this coin was part of an alliance between Constantine and Domitius Alexander, see BRUUN 1960, 166-168. The argument set forward by Bruun has been contested by Cullhed, who claims there is too little evidence to support such an interpretation, see CULLHED 1994, 44, n. 185.

at first when Maxentius was styled *princeps invictus*, but the latter's associates had seen to the proper instalment of the title in African lands. Now the very title with which Maxentius had meant to stand out was used against him: in Africa, too, an *optimus princeps* had risen to fight the Roman *princeps*.¹²⁴

A part of the legend used by Constantine and Domitius Alexander that has been left undiscussed so far provides us with our last argument that seems to point to a clear attempt on the part of Constantine and his associates to appropriate Maxentius' strategy of appealing to the Roman Senate and the *populus romanus*. Indeed, the S P Q R that preceded OPTIMO PRINCIPI had – like the title it accompanied – not been used in coinage for almost half a century.¹²⁵ And even though it had been part of the imitated reverse, its inclusion in his new coin type allowed Constantine to emphasise that his intended audience was the same as the one that had been targeted by Maxentius.¹²⁶ During his six years' rule, Maxentius had made the inhabitants of Rome fully aware that it was he who was mainly responsible for the new golden age of Rome. His extensive building program and the emphatic attention to the city of Rome in his coinage had meant to remind his subjects that with Maxentius the ancient capital would not be neglected. Constantine, aware of the ordeal outdoing Maxentius would be, must have thought a proper strategy of doing so was to play upon this relation that had existed between Maxentius and the city of Rome. Hence, he shrewdly modified the *conservator urbis suae* theme, and played upon the *princeps* theme.¹²⁷ In a way, then, Maxentius lived on in the image of Constantine.

5. CONCLUSION

In this article, we have touched upon a recurrent pattern in the history of Roman imperial representation: emperors had to relate to existing power structures in place; they could not simply ignore the expectations of their subject people. The creation of an imperial image that corresponded to this was a process of 'trial and error' – success was not always guaranteed. As for Maxentius, we have seen that the use of the *princeps* title may not have been picked up immediately by everyone. The tradition of the *princeps* at Rome at large, however, did meet the expectations of his audience in that it closely corresponded to current sentiments. To reaffirm this tradition, Maxentius presented himself in a way that reminded of the traditional 'good' emperors of the early imperial age – emperors that were first and foremost rulers under whose reign the city of Rome had prospered. In following these examples, Maxentius adhered to common imperial practice: the image of those whose rule had turned

out to be prosperous created positive feedback; whereas the less successful emperors tainted certain expressions of rule with negative associations. The aftermath of the battle of Milvian Bridge shows how this worked for the image of Maxentius himself. Although the tyrannical depiction of Maxentius by Constantine is well-known, the appropriation of his (visual) language (i.e. his style, iconography, and even titles) shows that Constantine recognised and then mobilised the success of the Maxentian image. In doing so, Constantine actively played upon the consensus that had existed between Maxentius and the inhabitants of the city of Rome. Maxentius thus proved to be a crucial component in Constantine's legitimization of power.

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¹²⁴ The uprising was eventually quelled by Maxentius, yet the celebration of Constantine's victory in Africa seems a proper indication of Maxentius' doubtful reputation, on which see HUMPHRIES 2008, 96-97.

¹²⁵ Gallienus had been the last to have the abbreviation appear on his coins: *RIC* v Gallienus 70, 393, 659.

¹²⁶ *RIC* vi dates the series with the SPQR OPTIMO PRINCIPI to ca. 310-313. If minted before October 312, this indicates Constantine's outreach to the senate and the people of Rome even before his victory and arrival.

¹²⁷ This effort was, however, temporary. Already during the propagation of these themes, the personal types of Constantine – which included an impressive numbers of coins depicting Sol Invictus (*RIC* vi Rome 313-344; 368-377) – were far more numerous. For the development of and main themes in Constantine's public image, see LENSKI 2016, 27-66.

Table 1. Important events surrounding Maxentius' rule and its reflection in coinage

Year	Date	Event	Notable changes in coinage
305	1 May	Diocletian and Maximian abdicate and retire; no place for Constantine and Maxentius in new imperial college	
306	25 July	Constantius dies; Constantine is proclaimed emperor by the troops, and is accepted within the Tetrarchy as Caesar	
	28 October	Maxentius is proclaimed emperor in Rome, but is not accepted by the Tetrarchs	Maxentian mints strike in name of Maximian, Constantine and Maximinus Daia
			Rome: D N MAXENTIVS PRINC / MAXENTIVS PRINC INVICT
	Fall/Winter	Africa joins the Maxentian cause	Carthage: MAXENTIVS NOB CAES
307	First half	Failed attempt of Tetrarchy to restore Italy I: Severus II defeated (dies in September)	
			Carthage: MAXENTIVS PRINC
	Spring		Maxentian mints no longer strike for Maximinus Daia
	Summer/Fall	Maxentius assumes <i>augustus</i> title	All around Maxentian realm: (variant of) IMP MAXENTIVS P F AVG
		Failed attempt of Tetrarchy to restore Italy II: Galerius retreats	
	25 December	Constantine marries Fausta, and forms alliance with Maximian and Maxentius, all three titled <i>augustus</i>	Constantinian mints strike in name of Maxentius and Maximian
308	Spring	Maximian and Maxentius clash; Maximian flees to Constantine; Maxentius left isolated	Maxentian mints strike in name of Maxentius alone
			Constantinian mints cease to strike in name of Maxentius
			Maxentian mints strike gold issues with legend PRINCIPI IMPERII ROMANI
	November	Conference at Carnuntum: second abdication of Maximian; Maxentius enemy of the state	
309		Domitius Alexander usurps in Africa, which as a result is seceded from the Maxentian realm	
		Death of Maxentius' son Valerius Romulus	
310			Constantine and Domitius Alexander: SPQR OPTIMVS PRINCEPS
	Spring/Summer	Death of Maximian: dies in Gaul after failed rebellion against Constantine	
	Summer/Fall	Maxentian forces suppress revolt of Domitius Alexander	
311	5 May	Death of Galerius	Commemorative coinage Maxentius in name of Maximian, Constantius and Galerius
312	Spring	Constantine enters Italy	
	28 October	Death of Maxentius: defeated by Constantine during the battle of the Milvian Bridge	Former Maxentian mints strike coins with legends LIBERATOR / RESTITVTOR VRBIS SVAE
315	25 July	<i>Decennalia</i> of Constantine in Rome; the Arch of Constantine is inaugurated	

Table 2. List of portraits of Maxentius.

1	Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Skulpturensammlung inv. no. Hm 406	Portrait of Maxentius, References: BERGMANN (1977), Taf. 45.1; EVERS (1992), 12, fig. 2; PRUSAC (2011), no. 297; LSA 896.
2	Hannover, Kestner Museum inv. no. 1979.1	Portrait of Maxentius. References: EVERS (1992), 10, 13, fig. 1, 4; LSA 2662.
3	Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 70	Portrait of Maxentius, recarved from a portrait of Augustus. References: BERGMANN (1977), 148, Taf. 44, no. 4; ROMEO (1999), 211; PRUSAC (2011), no. 233; VARNER (2014), 56, n. 16; LSA 884.
4	Rome, Museo Torlonia inv. no. 600	Portrait of Maxentius. References: CALZA (1972), no. 69; L'ORANGE (1984), 115; EVERS (1992), 9-13; PRUSAC (2011), no. 300; LSA 895.
5	Rome, private collection	Portrait of Maxentius, recarved from a portrait of Augustus. References: GIULIANO (1991), 7, figs. 5-8; (1997), 30, n. 3, no. I; VARNER (2014), 56, n. 16.
6	Stockholm, Nationalmuseum inv. no. Nm Sk 106	Portrait of Maxentius, recarved from a portrait of Trajan. References: BERGMANN (1977), Taf. 44.3; EVERS (1992), 15, 17, figs. 6, 10; VARNER (2004), no. 9.1; PRUSAC (2011), no. 298; LSA 897.

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